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Notes of the Week

Coalition

ANATIONAL Cabinet at last! Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey and Lord Kitchener have as their colleagues Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Chamberlain, and other Unionist leaders, including Sir Edward Carson. It is a pity Mr. Redmond did not see his way to accept a portfolio also. It would have made the representative character of the coalition perfect. Lord Haldane is among those who have been removed, and Mr. Churchill's energies have been relegated to the unexciting Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster. His successor at the Admiralty is Mr. Balfour. Mr. Bonar Law at the Colonial Office is excellent. Mr. Lloyd George's supersession by Mr. McKenna at the Treasury is the one feature of the new Cabinet which will not be generally approved. Quite a superstition seems to exist as to the indispensability of Mr. McKenna. Mr. Lloyd George will create a new department. He becomes Minister of Munitions, and in relieving Lord Kitchener of a very heavy part of his duties will, we hope, be as successful in the production of his leaden as he has been in his production of the silver bullets with which he undertook to beat the enemy. As a whole we think it will be agreed that the best brains of the nation are now in the national service. There will be no surrender of principles in domestic affairs which the old party divisions symbolised, but we have a guarantee that whatever is done has about it no suspicion of party. Germany has to be beaten, and the Government as now constituted is Britain's pledge that she will be beaten

Italy at War

Italy is definitely at war with Austria and Germany. Her troops are well over the frontier, and have carried positions at the point of the bayonet, her torpedo-boats

have been at work, and enemy aircraft have made attempts on the Venice arsenal. Italian enthusiasm is matched only by the bitterness of Austria and Germany. For charges of duplicity and treason Italy was of course prepared, but they will affect her as little as German hatred affects Great Britain. Italy has had ample opportunity not only in the past nine months, but in the past nine years, of forming her own estimate of the real worth of German friendship and German promises, and she has chosen to trust neither. That she should denounce the Triple Alliance and use her recovered freedom to strike for those things she has always held dear is not in the least strange. What was strange was her long adherence to the compact into which she entered when the circumstances of Europe were very different and Teutonic purposes were less obvious than they are now. Her entrance upon this great quarrel is naturally welcomed by France and her allies, and it will probably hasten the day when other neutrals will deem it wise to strike also in the interests of freedom and civilisation.

Desperate Germany

During the week the fighting everywhere has been of a desperate character in the Gallipoli Peninsula, in Galicia, and on the French-Belgian frontier. The Turks are no match for the Allied forces on the peninsula, and only manage to hold certain well-prepared positions at heavy cost. What is happening on the San is not easy to understand, but apparently the Russians have again so far recovered control of the situation as to be able to take the offensive. The enemy claims successes, but if the Germans have pushed the Russians back and have even crossed the San they have done so at a cost which must be little short of crippling. On the North-West the French have scored heavily; they have captured positions of first-rate importance in the neighbourhood of Arras and Notre Dame de Lorette, and the Germans have failed to drive them out again by the most furious and sacrificial onslaughts. The French troops are doing fine work. On the British section of the line the Germans are concentrating their poisonous gas efforts, and British successes recently have made the Germans more determined than ever to asphyxiate an enemy they cannot beat in a fair fight. Happily their villainous expedients are in the main ineffectual.

Empire Unity and the War

As we now have a new and more representative Government, may we hope that part of its programme will be the assembling of an Imperial Conference at a reasonably early date? The Dominions would like to hear and be heard in a way that is impossible by the use of the cable. Mr. Rowell, the leader of the Ontario Liberals, urges that a War Session of the Imperial Conference should be convened. It is a capital idea. It would enable the Mother Country and the Dominions to co-ordinate Imperial resources with a view to effective and speedier victory. The entire abandonment of any party spirit in the Overseas Dominions is the best proof

that they are keen to put all they possess into the struggle. Sir Wilfrid Laurier even refuses to consider the possibility of a general election in Canada until the end has been achieved. He would not, he said, seek to open the portals of office with that bloody key. Germany has indeed succeeded in making the British Empire whole, and Mr. Bonar Law's hope that a really representative Imperial body may be the result of the war should not be difficult of realisation. The war of 1870 federated the German Empire; the war of 1914-15 should federate the British Empire.

The Attack on Lord Kitchener

All England might have been amazed by the *Daily Mail's* onslaught on Lord Kitchener but that all England has learned never to be amazed at anything the *Daily Mail* may do. How it happens that Lord Northcliffe should lend himself to such an attack, narrowly spiteful in tone, utterly wanting in the public spirit which it purports to embody, we do not care to inquire. It may be that Lord Northcliffe imagines he is the one and only person who could give the Empire the army and the munitions it needs. Lord Kitchener may not have done everything which it might have been in the country's interests to achieve. Criticism couched in proper terms and with a due regard to all the facts even he must expect. Lord Kitchener has had to work with the materials he found available, and has accomplished wonders. He has rendered the country and the Empire service which perhaps no other living man could have performed, and that service will be remembered when the superior claims of the *Daily Mail* are buried in oblivion. English journalism has few things less to its credit than the *Daily Mail's* sudden discovery that it wants Lord Kitchener's head on a charger. Not Lord Kitchener but Lord Northcliffe will suffer. Patriotic men will look askance at his precious ha'porths for many a long day to come. The country could spare the *Daily Mail*: it cannot spare Lord Kitchener, and all the asphyxiating gas generated at Carmelite House has not made his position untenable.

"The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table"

THE mentors of the Press have recently taken to themselves strange shapes. We had long become used to their dictating to us the colour and trend of our politics, to their dominating our outlook on all affairs outside our immediate business, even to their taking sides on occasion in religious matters, and settling for us comfortably what to believe as necessary to our eternal welfare; but it is a new thing for the paper that lies beside our breakfast plate to tell us what that breakfast shall consist of! Hitherto the Englishman, whatever might rage outside his walls of verbal strife or bloody war, felt comparatively safe from incursions into the shelter of his home, there to

order his household and live his life in the way towards which his income and inclinations led him. *Nous avons changé tout cela!*

For many years it has been dawning upon the more thoughtful public that it has bartered its liberty of thought, its freedom of opinion which theoretically every Englishman holds so dear, for the privilege of possessing a halfpenny Press. The newspaper habit has grown upon us so insidiously and with such stealthy strides that it is only when brought up suddenly by a shock such as was dealt to innumerable readers the length and breadth of the countryside during the past week that we realise the state of bondage into which we have unconsciously drifted. War is a winnowing-machine into which the destinies of many things other than nations are being cast, and out of which few of our cherished customs will emerge unscathed. During the last century there has been no watchword more constantly paraded before our eyes than that of "freedom." It is the privilege which has been claimed by all leaders of thought as the prerogative of the individual, as well as of the nation. Above all, it has been claimed as a right by the Press, which proclaims itself the voice of the people. And the end of this claim has been that in this country the vast majority of individuals no longer trouble to think for themselves on any matters outside the circle of their immediate interests. When it can be done for them at the expenditure of one halfpenny a day, why should they waste brain energy on deciding problems which may now be used in attending cinemas or places of cheap amusement?

But until the outbreak of the war the home remained to a great extent inviolate. Newspaper-reading was not regarded as the woman's province, and although dailies and weeklies indulged in the printing of "seasonable recipes" and "useful hints" among the fashion-plates in a remote corner allotted to the gentler sex, the policy of home-making had not been the subject of serious crusades in the sense in which Home Rule, or the divorce laws, or the Suffrage question had played their parts.

Now, however, to the amusement of the competent housewife (of whom there are many in our midst, the opinion of the halfpenny Press notwithstanding), the power behind the morning paper has decreed that its duty lies in the reformation of the menu of its readers. Well might it be called the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table! What it decides on must be law, and no longer are eggs and bacon to grace the morning meal in comfortable unison, or shall porridge commence a meal of which marmalade is to be the harmonious ending. One dish, and one only, is to be our allowance, whatever our income or the work which lies before the weary breakfaster.

It has been decreed that all are spendthrifts, and that the only way to economic salvation lies in the gospel according to the —! It is indeed a remarkable feat of brilliant journalism and foresight which has suddenly discovered a truth borne home more surely and deeply with each succeeding week to the house-

keeper, whatever her status in society—a problem which has already been grappled with to such an extent that innumerable homes are not only paying their way in despite of vastly higher prices, but that cottage and villa and mansion alike have found something to spare, according to their ratio of income, for the needs of the soldiers abroad, of the wounded and the refugees at home, and of those in their midst touched by the finger of sorrow or want. There have been many tributes paid to the bravery of our men who are so loyally serving King and country; some word might be spared for the women who have as splendidly shouldered the additional burdens thrown upon them, the responsibility of caring for home and children, and yet of being ready to help others, when prices are such that every penny given to a good cause means some fresh and toilsome economy.

Presently these same papers will take to themselves the credit of having created a race of Spartan women, fit wives and mothers of a nation of heroic soldiers; but the women themselves know well enough that economy had become a very real factor in the running of the English home long before the Press called attention to the need for exercising that most necessary but always unpopular virtue. Were the daily mentors really so anxious to do something for the good of the present domestic situation they should have advised a scientific reconstruction both of the method of obtaining supplies and of putting necessities on the market at such prices that they may be available in sufficient quantities to the weekly wage earners forming the bulk of our population. In the homes of the labourer and the small clerk or shop assistant the practice of economy is pushed to its extremest limit by the force of untoward circumstance, with the result that our growing boys and girls—the fathers and mothers of an England which will be exhausted by a long and terrible war—are living on little else than bread and margarine, with perhaps a weekly scrap of meat at the midday meal. Why waste precious words on the saving of bath soap or of electric light when bread is at 4½d. the quartern loaf, and no one knows the exact reason why? In households who have from 15s. to 18s. a week to spend on all the necessities of life, economy becomes a struggle for bare existence, for which the health of future generations will have to pay, and to pay in a manner which England will ill be able to afford. Here is a matter for all the Press platitudes of popular journalism, and an uncomfortable reflection for many comfortably furnished breakfast-tables.

Aftermaths—III

TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

WHEN the post-war settlement is consummated and a reshaping of the world's geographical boundaries begins, the dry bones of Africa will rejoice as at a message of hope, and contemporary history will behold a great muster-roll. The past of the continent fades into the mist of legend, and who shall prophesy as to the advent of the breath of life to that home of mystery and old forgotten far-off things? Could we but unravel the prehistory record of Egypt, that record would surely take us back to a dim twilight, in which the shadowy Atlantean race dominated the cradle of civilisation. The Atlanteans and their hard-wrought ant-heap cities, as we now surmise, lie engulfed under the waste leagues of the Atlantic Ocean. All that is left is the physical race of men, ascending as torch-bearers through the gloom. Then, too, in the South, explorers of to-day, battling through jungle and pestilential swamp, from time to time hap upon the fossil remains of mighty peoples whose life-story has sunk for ever below the horizon. Dusty death and silence claim them as their own. Statesmen can but steer the ship of state in the waters of to-day, and seek to pick up the headland lights of to-morrow.

The Allied Powers must inevitably link their energies into more close and intimate alliance as time goes on. All the world knows that the criminal-conspiracy States—Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey—are already worsted. The more stubborn and prolonged their resistance the more stupendous will be the reckoning they will have in the end to face. We take this result to be common knowledge. Certain Powers have hitherto held aloof, in the vain dream that they can reap the harvest without sowing the seed. Nothing venture, nothing have. It is absolutely certain that, when the representatives of the war-worn States assemble as at an international parliament, to determine the final issues of a struggle then over, no sentimental consideration will turn them aside. Those who have borne the burden and heat of the fight will call the world's tune for the next hundred years to come. Thus was it with us a hundred years and also two hundred years ago. The peace treaties will be epoch-making. Those States which stand out will doubtless have been served by statesmen of the highest patriotism, but myopic vision in a statesman just now means that the people whose servant he is will get little or nothing when the day for recasting State boundaries dawns. Roumania and

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Greece are such expectant States. The sands of fate are running out for all of them. Bulgaria sees visions and dreams dreams of territorial expansion, but she seems definitely to have determined to stand aside in the struggle. So be it. It is certain that the great assize of nations, with whom will rest the remodelling of the world's State frontiers, will barter no soil for empty aspirations. It must have been won by tears and blood.

Reverting to the subject of Sir Harry Johnston's paper before the Royal Geographical Society, he furnishes a series of maps of Africa which are of intense interest. These are as follows:—The political map of Africa in July, 1914, the same as it might have been by international pact in 1916, had the German Emperor not emulated the madness of a rogue elephant and enforced on the world his own destruction and the extinction of the political power he has so shamefully abused. The next of the series shows international boundaries as they will probably be after the war. Subsidiary maps indicate the areas of the continent inhabited by the white man or Caucasian sub-species, the same areas inhabited by black, brown, and yellow races. Another map defines the future great prospective railway systems of Africa. A further series are diagrammatic respectively of the mineral and vegetable values, the dominant languages, and the germ diseases of the African continent. These nine maps furnish a prescient survey worthy of their distinguished author. Second in interest to the maps of State demarcation comes that of the railway trunk routes of the future. The soil of Africa in the post-war settlement, according to these maps, will fall to Great Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, and Spain, the kingdom of Abyssinia remaining an independent Power.

In Sir Harry's opinion, Germany in 1914 stood well in view of securing overseas possessions and spheres of influence "till these reached an area of over 2,000,000 square miles, with a very varied population of almost all types of the human race (except the Amerindian), totalling about 75,000,000. All this," he adds, "she has lost, and, I believe, lost for all time, through the mad wickedness of those who have directed her home government." The central States have elected to appeal to the sword. The world has, in consequence, witnessed and endured a long-drawn drama of agony. For years the volcanic rumbling of Germany's ambition has broken the rest of peoples of every nationality. Now civilised folk are banded as in a common cause, bent on ridding history of the crimes of hordes of *apaches* who have blocked progress and spelt anarchy to mankind at large. It is a big task, but it is well on toward completion. During the past four or five years Germany has toiled her hardest to embroil Europe over Morocco, although the word had been passed in secret that she herself was to stand clear of the struggle she hoped to provoke. Among her many futile efforts to overreach her friendly neighbours stand out also her intrigues in Tripoli. Germany had posed as the guardian angel of each régime of Turkish tyranny.

Let it be Sultan or Little Turk, it was all one to her. She was the ally of Austria-Hungary and also of Italy. With her customary clumsiness in trick and artifice, her Government set itself to evolve from its inner consciousness an Austro-Hungarian Chartered Company of Tripoli. This company was to be formed to take the job of government from the hands of Turkey. The plot leaked out. Where Germany mined, Italy had counter-mined. The result was that German treachery was blown sky-high, for the Italians forestalled her and precipitately landed troops on the shores of Tripoli, trusting to the *fait accompli*. The fury of the German leaders of policy knew no bounds, for their house of cards had fallen to the ground. Had the Brigand of Berlin been permitted to wedge himself into territory adjoining Egypt, we might have bid good-bye to days of fruitful advance in the Nile valley. Chaos would have come again.

Sir Harry draws a fascinating picture of the ultimate transformation of Africa by railway. The French Trans-Saharan line is already built to Igli, and French administrators dream that it will one day be linked up with a trunk line from Cairo to the Cape. Thus it may be that Cook's tourists of the future will travel from Tangier to Cape Town without change of carriage. The *raison d'être* of the persistent demand for railway access from the Cape to Cairo is somewhat obscure. In order to open up a continent, the river systems of which run roughly east and west, prospectors would, one would have imagined, have been better advised to improve the rivers and trust in the main to transport by sea. However, the project of a railway through the heart of the Dark Continent, where ancient cartographers were wont to set down elephants in lack of towns, if far-fetched, appears to have obsessed the dreams of policy of Cecil Rhodes. Since his day it has grown to be a sort of fetish of our administrators. Step by step it is in course of realisation, and will help to bring the civil administration of Africa nearer the goal of practical politics. The coming round-table conference, whose rôle it will be to reshape the future of the post-war world, will surely bear in mind one aspiration. Belgium has her Congo dominion; Germany had her East African dominion. Let the plenipotentiaries enable Belgium to find an outlet to the Indian Ocean, giving her the physical means of linking, by railway or otherwise, the two great oceans.

A. E. CAREY.

The Significance of Berlioz

BY D. C. PARKER

IT was held by some that the war of 1870 did something to bring Berlioz into prominence. The German success emphasised the greatness of Wagner, and the French, it was said, looked around them for their hero. And so they discovered Berlioz, who had one thing in common with most of the world's teachers. He was misunderstood and neglected during his life. Though forty-six years have passed since his death, due repara-

tion for this has not yet been made. Many have spoken of the three B's of music, meaning Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. This always seems to me to be unkind to Brahms. Greater justice is done to him if we recognise that he was in no respect the equal of the so-called father and son of the musical trinity. Perhaps the fact that his name begins with the magic letter B suggested the grouping to those in whom some curious superstition still lingers. It is a mental process worthy of a degenerate ourang-outang. For there is no reason for chaining giants and men together. We do not talk of Wagner and Waldteufel or of Liszt and Löhr. If we must amuse ourselves with these alliterations, let us say Bach, Beethoven, and Berlioz. Berlioz claimed to have taken up music where Beethoven laid it down, and some incline to the view that the "Roméo et Juliette" symphony is the real successor to Beethoven's choral one. Whether we agree with these views or not, we must frankly admit that Berlioz opened up a new world for modern musicians in a sense that Brahms did not. While the four symphonies of Brahms do not show any evidence of an advance on Beethoven's last symphonic work, the music of Berlioz was startlingly new in its time, and its character is such that it is to-day the subject of animated discussion. He trod the path along which Wagner, Liszt, and Strauss made their later musical pilgrimages. Quite recently a French paper pointed out to what a large extent the last-named is indebted to the Frenchman. It seems to me that the historical significance of Berlioz is dawning upon the reflective musician. And the fact that he was the most notable exhibitor at the Salon of the Rejected does not necessarily count as a mark against his name.

If we assert with Descartes, "I think, therefore I am," we can say that Berlioz was a man who lived intensely. Few musicians have dwelt more in the world of the imagination. In the midst of Paris, with its manifold activities, he was lonely. He held converse with the shades, and laid out schemes for the music of the future. He belonged to a society of one. To many the literary portraits of Berlioz give an impression of insanity. But this is just where we may be led astray. "We say that a man is mad when he does not think as we do. That is all. Philosophically, the ideas of madmen are as legitimate as our own." So writes the fellow-countryman of Berlioz, Anatole France. Examining the composer according to this method, he may seem a little mad. For sanity is the madness of the majority, and Berlioz was original even in his mental foibles. He talked with his Trojans and walked the streets of Carthage when the world around him was on the boulevards. Read his letters, and you will observe that his dreams and hopes were real, while the realities passed over him like dreams. This is but a reason why we should make ourselves familiar with his compositions. It is in the blind that the spiritual vision is quickened.

It is because the whole strength of Berlioz's opulent imagination was not transmitted to his works that it is difficult to form an estimate of him. As was the

case with the painter Cézanne, the mental vision was one thing, the visible result of it another. We feel that he really defies analysis. It would seem as though, like Strindberg, he searched for God and found the devil. At any rate, he remains fundamentally something of a contradiction. He was a romanticist with a touch of cynicism, and, as a French critic has put it, a cynic is a sentimentalist turned inside out. Like Dr. Johnson and Voltaire, he is one of those men whose personalities were infinitely greater than their works are. I have not the slightest doubt that many of his pieces meant more to him than they ever meant to others. And herein lies something of the tragedy of his life. In order to give full expression to all that flitted through his brain, a man would need to be one of the world's greatest figures—a musical Dante, let us say. He walked in the Inferno many times, and painted highly coloured pictures of it in the rich hues of the orchestra. But failure, like a sinister shadow, seemed to dog his steps. Even after he became tolerably well known to intelligent musicians, something of the fame which he might legitimately have expected to win was withheld. Liszt with his symphonic poems and Wagner with his music-dramas set all tongues wagging, and Berlioz, who had done so much to make their achievements possible, was forgotten, if, indeed, he had ever been properly remembered by the public.

It is to be hoped that the present political conditions will encourage the musician to study Berlioz. Despite his faults, he is worth knowing. A genius is a genius by reason of that fraction of his personality which is different from that of other people. You can live with a violent revolutionary without knowing that he differs from you. Nine-tenths of most men are similar to nine-tenths of all the others. It is the odd tenth to which we owe poems and symphonies. In some the fraction of originality is larger. So was it with Berlioz. His visions, his dreams of humanity, his mental pictures of pain and triumph were part of the man. That is why he was so lonely and why he remains so unique in the gallery of the great musicians. If his imagination tortured him, the gain is ours. The best things come to us through sorrow. And if in examining his life and music we find something infinitely sad, we must look upon it philosophically. Man is but an episode, a brief intermezzo in the cosmic drama. It was, perhaps, this haunting thought that caused Berlioz, in his latter days, to look within himself and lay his treasures where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.

The new volume in the "Wayfarers' Library," just issued by Messrs. Dent, is "The Black Watch," the first of a new section entitled "The Story of the Regiments." This book is not a reprint, but has been specially written by L. Cope Cornford and F. W. Walker for the series. It gives the history, together with the stories of the great deeds of this famous regiment, and contains a coloured frontispiece of the full dress of the regiment with the badge and flag. Other volumes will follow shortly.

Failure—and Farewell

TO fail is to fare well. It is a familiar paradox. But, true to the rule of rules, it is proved by its exception:

Men's hearts failing them for fear!

This is the one and only true failure—Fear. To fail for fear is to fail indeed. Fearless failure is sure success. The feet of success are "*washed in the blood of the heart.*"

To-day, failures are numberless as the whirling specks in the wake of vanishing wheels: and in this terrific era of wheels it would seem that truth itself has grown rapid and ruthless.

We are told that all which is *formal* and *academic* must pass out; that the "dead" languages must accept complete extinction; that their beautiful shades must cease to haunt us. We are finding it hard to know what "culture" means. Wherefore?

Because the spirit of "Kultur" has descended from silence to a babel . . . and from a babel to the roar of hell, where force drowns for ever the living power of the spoken word. The depths of falsity rend and bewilder a noble people. Into these depths the spirit of Kultur springs . . . fearless as a *Curtius*: we hear her wailing (yet sweet and triumphant): "Farewell"; and, faring well in failure, she shall prove herself immortal by the *bridging* of the gulf in years to be.

But fifteen years have floated over the head of the new century, and their message has been strangely unanimous. It is this:

Fare well by solidarity! Fare well by sympathy!
Link the talking world to the speechless thinking world.
Let the talkers cry for re-adjustment, and let the thinkers
calmly re-adjust.
For the death of a dynasty is the liberation of its collec-
tive spirit.
In failing it fares well.

Now, with the fall of the blossom, we watch the forming fruit. Now the votaries of faith commemorate the Triumph of the Spirit.

Now, "after Whitsuntide," our Western World shall cast lots, and elect a new apostle.

The liar . . . the materialist . . . is once more passing, in his own Aceldama, to his own place.

Let us hasten to the forum of truth, for she is bringing from her treasury things new and old. The souls who failed her from fear pass to Helas, faring ill. But on Olympus the stars collect for a song. Apollo, as sponsor at the font of wisdom, lays the child of the old law and learning in the arms of a Future awaiting the Name!

BEATRICE S. AGNEL.

REVIEWS

An Overdose, and its Antidote

Bernard Shaw: The 20th Century Molière. By AUGUSTIN HAMON. Translated by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL. (Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)
Commonsense about the Shaw. By HAROLD OWEN. (Allen and Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)

THE unqualified worship of a hero is never very pleasing to men of critical minds, and, though we should be far from applying the word "hero" to Mr. Shaw, the intense way in which M. Augustin Hamon regards him as an object for admiration becomes a little oppressive. To him, nearly everything Shaw writes, says, or thinks is perfection; what he wears, eats, and drinks is matter for serious interest; his "continuous flow of wit hardly ever palls," and we are treated once more to the hoary and wearisome anecdote of the man in the gallery at the first night of one of the plays. Shaw excels everybody; he is better than Ibsen, Mirbeau, Brieux; he is bracketed with Aristophanes; "like Rabelais, Montaigne, Molière, Voltaire, Diderot, the Encyclopædists, Proudhon, and the Socialist and Anarchist thinkers of the nineteenth century, Shaw marches boldly forwards towards a progressive future." We find constantly the fulsome comparison, the anything but critical contrast. "Plautus, Molière, Holberg, and Bernard Shaw, for example. . . ." "We see this in Plautus, Ben Jonson, Molière, Holberg, Le Sage, and Bernard Shaw. . . ." "In the work of Aristophanes, Plautus, Molière, Ben Jonson, Holberg, Le Sage, Beaumarchais, and Shaw we may note. . . ." M. Hamon is like a musical-box with only one air; he can only play the Shaw-tune, and the name brays in at the end of each list of famous dramatists with the persistence of a monotonous, cracked bell. It is irritating, and it is not criticism. There is some value for students in the analysis of the plots and the table of resemblances to Molière—but the author spoils his work by his attitude of grovelling adoration. Mr. Shaw is, or has been, a clever and entertaining playwright; but when his familiar states that "as the centuries pass the more complete will be the recognition of the power and the greatness of his work," we are tempted to throw the book aside impatiently. M. Hamon introduces himself, not too modestly, in a "dedicatory epistle" from which we gather that in France he is considered rather a "crank" on social reform; and this explains much of the gushing trend of the whole treatise.

As an antidote, we can highly recommend Mr. Owen's brilliant essay in the art of denunciation, and for once we have found a publisher's preliminary announcement absolutely correct; it is undoubtedly "the most spirited indictment and analysis of Mr. Shaw's controversial methods which has yet been written." Every page is pungent, and if the author of "Common Sense about the War" is not yet ashamed of that inept and untimely pamphlet, this book ought to penetrate

his armour of conceit. We are almost afraid to begin quoting, there is so much that is witty and pointed; but we give one passage as an example of Mr. Owen's vigorous and yet dignified protest:

He might have taken as his text not the hypocrisy of England, but the commonplace burglary of German soldiers—with an organised "War Prize Service" emptying Belgian houses of their furniture, clearing them from floor to garret like systematic brokers' men, and packing the loot off to the Fatherland; he might have written of the bare, trampled fields; the missing stolen cattle; the missing villages—wiped out, so that in some places you cannot tell where the church stood; of the women and old folk driven wandering among piles of disordered bricks, laughing in madness; of the underlinen sent by officers home to wives who will coquettishly wear the shameful loot; of babies being born to famished women lying on stone in devastated churches. There were a thousand texts for the humanitarian to preach from, to arm us with the faith to fight this war in a spirit to ensure that all wars might cease—to uplift our hearts for an immense task yet before us. But of these crimes, bringing misery to every man, woman and child in an innocent land, only a few dubious words from the humanitarian; and of the unspeakable and bloodier crimes: "there is no trustworthy evidence. . . ." Even the political crime would have yielded a large theme for him: to show that the burglarious outrage of Germany made every shot fired by her at the Belgian defenders a shot of sheer murder. . . . But the very straightforwardness of that theme—its common, humdrum, obvious human truth—disqualified it, of course, as a worthy theme for the gigantic intellect of the humanitarian Shaw. He will not let his feet tread the broad highway which others conscientiously plod. A "humanitarian," the intellectual company of his kind is not good enough for him; a "Socialist," he is anti-social to the core; a "democrat," he fights with tooth and claw to detach himself from the majority. All these things we by now understand and are prepared for. But, though scarcely prepossessed in his favour, I was not prepared to find that he, the most studious and implacable "humanitarian" we have, could have let pass the opportunity which bleeding Belgium gave him by writing thirty-five thousand words mainly to prove our "hypocrisy" and not sparing fifty in Belgium's pity.

It will be seen that Mr. Owen is concerned simply with one thing—Mr. Shaw's notorious pamphlet; and that he is well equipped to meet the author of it on his own ground. Mr. Owen is in a calm, dangerous mood, and we can only hope that his masterly exposure will be as widely read as the "Hun-convincing" nonsense (he will excuse our reproduction of his pardonable pun) which inspired it.

Mr. George Russell and the War

The Spirit of England. By GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL. (Smith, Elder. 5s. net.)

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL'S essays are always entertaining and charged with simple merits. He manages to find a text for many well-worn themes under the general title of "The Spirit of England," and if he

makes no material contribution to our knowledge of ourselves, he affords the opportunity for pleasant, healthful reflections on patriotism, religion, economy, the voice of the people, poetry, prejudice, and the thousand and one topics which the war has brought into our purview. "War, whatever else it does, opens John Bull's eyes to a wider vision"; it has also opened Mr. Russell's. No surer proof of the manner in which the mighty conflict in which we are now engaged has entered into the very soul of England could be given than the fact that he has been induced to discuss issues—mostly side issues—and to write with an almost stern conviction that Great Britain is fighting the fight of righteousness. It has even turned him to thoughts of his own pedigree and the part his ancestors have played in making England what she is. Needless to say there is no glorification of war, however righteous, in Mr. Russell's pages. "Boys," said Sherman to the West Point students, "you think war is all glory: I tell you it is hell," and no war ever came nearer to demonstrating that truth than has the present. Mr. Russell is happiest in such a passage as the following, in which he deals with the atrocities for which Nana Sahib was responsible:

The truth was bad enough in all conscience, and abundantly justified—nay, imperiously demanded—the stern and solemn punishment which followed it. England showed, not for the first or the last time, that she does not bear the sword in vain. But there was a prurient and lying spirit abroad that added to the truth a maddening tale of outrage and mutilation, which, before it could be proved baseless, transformed a righteous demand for punishment into a bestial passion of revenge. Those hateful falsehoods evoked from the depths of our nature the sombre and ferocious instincts which civilisation, which religion itself, can never wholly eradicate. Even the great Lord Shaftesbury fell a victim to the deceit, and, with all the emphasis which belonged to his exalted character, proclaimed what Sir George Trevelyan calls "the fables which it is our misfortune that we once believed, and our shame if we ever stoop to repeat."

But though England contained no nobler heart than Shaftesbury's, she contained wiser and cooler heads. In September, 1857, Lord Granville was writing to his friend the Governor-General, who, by his steady resistance to the cry for indiscriminate bloodshed, gained the glorious nickname of "Clemency Canning," and he thus reported a recent conversation at Balmoral: "The Queen and the Prince Consort take what I think the sensible view of the punishments—great severity for the real culprits; transportation where death is not required; great care to spare the innocent, women, and children, etc.; and *no Vandal destruction of towns, palaces, etc.*" I italicise these words in remembrance of Louvain.

Mr. Russell is an enemy of Militarism and Bureaucracy, as we all know; to him *vox populi vox Dei*. He is, however, glad that we have discovered Russia. "To-day John Bull is beginning to perceive, with a quaint surprise, the magnificent qualities of the race which he had learned from Palmerston to despise and from Beaconsfield to fear. . . . It is difficult for English Liberalism to admire autocracy, and we cling

to the hope that the East may yet learn from the West the art of self-government. But religion is itself a form of freedom, and if there is a portion of the globe where religion enters intimately into the daily life and habitual thought of the people, that portion is the Russian Empire." Truly, if Mr. Russell in any way represents the spirit of England on the Liberal side—and we think he does—the war has worked wonders. Only in one instance have we come across a sentence to which we might seriously demur. One of the old foes, with unpleasing face, he says, which may have to be fought in the interests of liberty is Militarism—"the spirit which aims at passing the whole nation through a barrack-room in order to efface the manly characteristics of independence and self-reliance, and to substitute for them the dog-like qualities of obedience and submission." That is an almost ideal way of misrepresenting the views of those who would have imposed universal service on England in order to combat militarism. However, we forgive Mr. Russell this lapse for the sake of what he has to say of the Bureaucratic bugbear, mainly the creation of his own Liberal friends, which threatens to cover the face of the whole earth with Inspectors, Commissioners, Rate Collectors, and detectives. In lighter vein are chapters on war and humour, and war and language. Even for the sake of the *Entente Cordiale* Mr. Russell objects to speaking of serviette when he means napkin, prefers a tight place to impasse, and approves the "Hell" of the private soldier to the "Inferno" of the officer. The book is peppered with gems of quotation.

Zealous Reformers

Quaker Women. By MABEL RICHMOND BRAILSFORD.
(Duckworth and Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

THE tracing of an analogy between the early Quakers and the present-day militant Suffragettes would seem to one with a knowledge of the former, gained mostly from tradition added to the usual small amount of history of the sect such as is contained in the ordinary text-books of the period, almost ridiculous. A gentle, kind people to be compared to the pushing, clamorous females assaulting policemen and generally making themselves offensive! Yet there is more than one kind of missionary zeal, and from the actions of some of the religious enthusiasts, who numbered among their members such fine characters as William Penn and George Fox, it would seem that many were inspired as much by a desire for their advertisement as for the cause they were supposed to represent. Seizing upon inspiration only, these fanatical people neglected a large part of the faith preserved for them for so many hundreds of years by the Church whose priests they now insulted and whose buildings they entered only to disturb the worship. Like a large number of Protestant reformers, it was upon the Old Testament that the Quakers based a great deal of their teaching; they were the people singled out to denounce others, the King even being refused the honour due to his station,

although upon any of their own little gathering who particularly pleased them they did not hesitate to shower phrases usually applicable to the Deity alone.

A nursing mother thou art who feeds the hungry with good things, but the fat with judgment, who kiles and slayes the liveinge and raises the dead. Judgment is comited into thy hands and Judgment thou gives to whom judgment belongs and marcy to whom marcy belongs. Power in heaven and in earth is given unto thee, thou glorious daughter of Sion.

So wrote Thomas Holme to Margaret Fell, and George Fox received communications in equally extravagant language.

Carrying their message to America, neither Elizabeth Hooton nor Mary Fisher received very tender handling from those who were in authority in New England, while the mission of the latter woman, a simple servant maid as she originally was, to the Grand Turk himself, proves that nothing daunted these zealous souls. Winning, as they did, the praise of friend and enemy for their fair and honourable dealing, the Quakers showed little tact in matters where diplomacy might have gained them friends and furthered their cause. They preferred rather to hurl denunciations at all who could or would not agree with their strict mode of life than to persuade with kindly words of sympathy.

In view of the later severity of the Quaker costume, it is worthy of note that Margaret Fell, a woman of good social standing, pleaded that young people should be dressed "in pleasing fashions," although this lady at the time she made her appeal was eighty-eight years old. Outward appearances, although of a different kind, were not altogether despised by others of the sect, for Elizabeth Hooton, when she went to London to lay a complaint before Charles II, recounts:

It came upon me to gett a coat of sackcloth, and it was plaine to me how I should have it. Soe we made that coat. And the next morning I were moved to goe amongst them again at Whitehall, in sackcloth and ashes.

Possibly the great contrast of this quaint person who claimed to be a "witness of God" to the gaily robed dames by whom the Merry Monarch was wont to surround himself was the cause of the King granting her a certificate to settle in any of the British Colonies.

Jane Stuart, a natural daughter of James II, is, perhaps, one of the most interesting of the notable group Miss Brailsford has collected and described with such interest and accuracy. The Stuarts were not in the habit of showering gifts and honours upon an illegitimate offspring of the female sex, or of providing her with a rich husband; consequently, little Jane was allowed in a great measure to lead her own life, and when, at her father's deposition, she determined to leave for ever the Court life she cared for so little, there was no one to interfere with her for shaping her own course. She betook herself to Wisbech, where she lived in obscurity among other Quakers for the remainder of her life. The author has rendered a good service to history in the carefully compiled record she has given us of these sometimes fanatical, sometimes admirable women.

Country Philosophy

Mrs. Green Again. By EVELYNE E. RYND. (John Murray. 2s. 6d. net.)

It is like breaking the butterfly upon the wheel to criticise seriously a book of this description. It is a brochure, a sweetmeat to be dealt with lightly and to afford an hour of idle amusement in the hammock or on the seashore. This no doubt it will give to many who will accept it on the surface and its many racy sayings without looking beneath at the structure or at the knowledge of country philosophy and philosophers which it reveals. Within the covers are laughs innumerable, shrewd humour, and an observation of men and events which might well lead to a book more worthy of the author's quite evident powers.

Our quarrel with it is that the character of Mrs. Green partakes too much of the nature of the composite pictures which were once the fashion, where in one face were depicted the virtues or the beauties of a hundred distinct and different types. Some knowledge of the district of which Miss Rynd writes, of its villagers, its sayings and doings, leads one in reading "*Mrs. Green*" into a strong feeling of disbelief in her possession of the powers of language and criticism with which she is so unswervingly credited. We do not believe that even her unlimited diet of *Daily Mail* would have endowed her with a vocabulary as varied and picturesque as the one she uses.

Our experience of the men and women of Kent is that, while language may flow readily and unceasingly, words are few, and many of those used in the book quite unknown to the class of the "char-lady." Again, the most intimate knowledge of the *Daily Mail* (which is the only literature she confesses to) wedded to the enormous capacity for the retention of village scandal that was Mrs. Green's *tour de force* would hardly give rise to the apt and pungent criticisms of the war which form the most solid portion of the book. Mrs. Green on the village is inimitable, a joy and a reality; Mrs. Green on politics is an anomaly, and consequently an irritation. The advice of the reviewer is like that of the friend: it is sometimes asked for but never taken; nevertheless, we venture to suggest that a village story, distributed among various characters and embellished with the local entourage and atmosphere that Miss Rynd so ably suggests, would have a much greater air of verisimilitude than this monologue, and be likely to live amongst the annals of village life. Nor is there a sphere at once so full of possibility and so neglected as this. The old village life of England is fast dying out. The features which once differentiated one part of the countryside from another are now becoming merged into a common type; the influence of the town and the cinema is destroying the individuality of the hamlet, and it is a loss to life and literature which is irreparable. Happy are they who can catch that spirit in the corners where yet it lingers and transcribe it in words or colour for the benefit of the unborn future.

Fiction

"GRIM-VISAGED WAR," the shock of arms, excursions and alarums, and the "Furor Teutonicus," otherwise the frightfulness of the modern Vandal, are the materials out of which Mr. W. H. Williamson has constructed his war-story "*To Arms!*" (T. Werner Laurie, 6s.). Historical novels are generally built around a long-ago past, but this one boldly deals with events no older than yesterday, the gruesome raids on Flanders, which he pictures with stirring realism. The sacking of Dinant and Louvain are here vividly described, together with the retreat from Mons and the fighting to the Rivers, and the desperate attacks of the Bavarians and the Prussian Guards, when the élite of the War Lord's armies became mere cannon fodder and billets for British bullets and bayonets. With this the author shows the enemy in all his brutality, his bravery, and his cleverness; but the reader will be more interested in the picture of valorous, patient Tommy Atkins, ever ready with a joke and a song in the midst of untold suffering as he champions the cause of righteousness and humanity. The story should prove a great help to recruiting if any writing can be, and we wish it could be put on the market at sixpence rather than six shillings.

"Behind the Thicket," by W. E. B. Henderson (Max Goschen, 6s.), as its title implies, is of the earth earthy, so long as we are in the company of the faun-like boy, Michael Repton, while he rambles through the woods and communes with Mother Earth and the rest of Nature. A child of the mist in a prosaic world, he arrests the reader's attention from the outset, and his sylvan fantasies have a sustained charm but little inferior to that of the famous forest scenes in "Abbé Muret's Transgression." With the exception of his sister Sylvia, a worldly young woman who elopes with a pianist and so meets with misfortune, the other characters and episodes are more likely to confuse than to interest the reader, and the elimination of several of them would have been an improvement.

Miss Ethel M. Dell, who achieved a well-merited success with her first novel, "*The Way of an Eagle*," bids fair to become one of our most popular lady story-tellers. "*The Keeper of the Door*" (T. Fisher Unwin, 6s.) will not detract from the reputation she has deservedly won, though it is not, perhaps, quite up to the level of her initial success, to which it is in some respects a sequel. Nick Ratcliffe, the hero of the earlier work, figures again; so does Max Wyndham from "*The Rocks of Valpré*"; but the story is quite one apart, and can be read and enjoyed without previous knowledge of the other two. Comedy and melodrama provide the sustaining interest, especially the latter, when India is reached, with opium-poisonings, a man-eating tiger, and a native revolt. Miss Dell has created a rather new type of story, with an ugly hero as chief attraction; her witty dialogue never fails to amuse, and her somewhat brutal male characters and docile women possess originality.

Shorter Notices

A Nun of Ypres

An enclosed nun, unless she be of a wonderfully sympathetic disposition and takes great interest in the lives of the few persons from the outside world with whom she comes into contact, must necessarily have a limited outlook with regard to things in general. And as "D. M. C.," the writer of "The Irish Nuns at Ypres" (Smith, Elder and Co., 2s. 6d. net), does not appear to have been greatly interested in anything beyond the daily routine of her beloved monastery—now unfortunately a ruin—the book contains no vivid description or fresh details with regard to Ypres, the home of this Order. The book purports to be about the lives of the nuns, and about them it is; but a religious community surely exists for other things than its own welfare and pleasure—even when that pleasure consists of many and early Masses and other religious services. Yet little is said about the sufferings of those outside the Order; claimants for a night's shelter or a day's food are not turned away, but the reader gathers that succour was given out of the kindness of heart of the Abbess, not because it was the special privilege of certain holy women to succour the helpless, to feed the hungry. When the Germans had succeeded in repulsing the Allies, it was not the thought of the probable sufferings of the already severely tried citizens or of the hopeless refugees who would lose their poor but valued belongings which disturbed the ladies of the convent, but the knowledge that they would be deprived of some of the outward forms of their religious consolations. However, all who read the story of the terrible destruction of the monastery—the home of the Order for 250 years—must feel sorrow for the Sisters forced to abandon all they held dear and find a refuge in another land, although England, to which they came, was only too glad to give them shelter. They, with other inhabitants of the country which felt the first and fiercest blast of the war, must be looking and watching anxiously to know when there is likely to be the slightest possibility of a return to the land they still regard as home, and it is to be hoped that the profits derived from the sale of the book will help towards that end.

A Scientist and Mystic

The value of such a book as "The Magic of Experience," by H. Stanley Redgrove (Dent, 2s. 6d.), lies in its fine encouragement in these troublous and depressing days. In three divisions, entitled "Idealism," "Mysticism," and "The Nature and Criteria of Truth," the author covers ground which is usually fenced about for the unwary with innumerable metaphysical and philosophical terms, touching upon the ideas of Bishop Berkeley with a higher regard to their value than is often the case, and proceeding to discuss, with a decided leaning to Swedenborg, deeper problems—such as the conflict between mysticism and reason. He defends intuition, and the inward consciousness of spiritual truth, quite naturally, and, as a scientist himself, draws some fascinating illustrations of the possibility of "absolute" truth from the properties of the hyperbola and its asymptotes—the lines which continually approach but can never conceivably meet. It is not an easy matter to explain this to those untrained in mathematics, but Mr. Redgrove does it, we think, admirably. Rarely shall we find such an assertion as this coming from a confessed mystic: "Rationality or reason is the sole criterion of truth: a statement

is true if it is rational; it is not true if it is irrational." This might make a splendid theme for debate; but, however we regard it, it is just this combination of the scientist and the visionary which makes the charm of the book. Mr. Redgrove is an excellent guide along some very difficult ways in which a good many "blind leaders of the blind" have become hopelessly lost.

MOTORING

HOLIDAY touring this summer will, for obvious reasons, be confined to Great Britain, and no doubt many motorists who do not consider it necessary to dispense entirely with their annual vacation are already making their arrangements. It may be useful to remind such that many of the hotels in various parts of the country are fully occupied by officers engaged in training troops, whilst others have had their accommodation commandeered for wounded and convalescent soldiers from the front. It is most advisable, therefore, that hotel arrangements be made well in advance of arrival at the towns included in the itinerary. In normal times, as is generally known among those in the motoring world, the Automobile Association issues to its members an up-to-date and reliable list of hotels, with their charges, nature and extent of accommodation, etc., but the changed conditions resulting from the war have naturally made it impossible to do so this year. Nevertheless, members of the A.A. and M.U. in need of advice or assistance on such matters have only to communicate with the Head Offices of the Association, or any of the branch offices, to obtain all possible help and available information regarding the choice of hotels for the holidays. It should be borne in mind also that many of the A.A. roadside sentry-boxes containing telephones are still in operation, and that these telephones can be used for local calls free of charge, when it is desired to ring up hotels en route.

The secretary of the A.A. and M.U. would be glad if members would make it generally known among their motoring friends who are also members that many of the articles occasionally lost from cars are recovered by the Association through its patrols, and that every week there is a collection of such property awaiting identification by owners. In some instances members have benefited in this direction to the extent of several times the amount of their annual subscription, by recovering, through the Lost Property Department of the A.A., such valuable articles as spare wheels fitted with new covers and tubes, etc. This reminder is necessary because of the fact that many members, after losing property on the roads, seem to forget that the A.A. possesses these facilities for collecting, and restoring to owners, lamps, tyres, tubes, accessories, luggage and other items dropped from cars on the road. When an article is missed during a journey it is advisable to stop and inform the next road patrol of the loss, as the earlier the intimation, the better the chance of quick recovery.

Tourists travelling, or likely to travel, in Kent,

Surrey, Sussex, Wilts, Dorset, or Hampshire will do well to obtain a copy of the map which has just been specially prepared by the Automobile Association. The map clearly indicates the location of the roads in the above-mentioned counties which have been damaged by the heavy military traffic, and its utility has already been much appreciated by members who have had occasion to travel in the districts covered. A copy will be sent by return of post to any A.A. member on application to the head offices of the Association, London, or to any of the branch offices in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

The Theatre

"The Day Before the Day"

FOR all that we receive at the St. James's Theatre we are, generally speaking, truly thankful; but we left its classic portals after seeing this new clumsily named play with very mixed feelings. It will hardly be believed, but Sir George Alexander has placed upon his usually well-conducted stage a real, florid, blood-and-thunder melodrama, with spies, villains, beautiful maiden in distress, hero triumphant, and plenty of pistols (so many that we gave up counting) all complete. Needless to say, there is no part here for "G. A."—he remains unseen, enjoying tremendously, we suppose, the little joke he has sprung upon his patrons.

To attempt to tell the full story of the plot would tax our memory and the reader's patience. Mysterious telegrams arrive, and are read slowly to the audience in the dear old way; several letters also, scented with musk—aha! Mysterious appointments are kept by the harrowed heroine (Miss Grace Lane), who has been engaged—*ante bellum*—to Max von Ardel, "an officer in the Prussian Guards." So runs Act I. In Act II we are introduced to a nest of German spies on the East Coast, into whose confidence a German-American, Mr. Schindler (Mr. A. B. Imeson) has been taken—and very sorry for himself he looks. Captain Guy Howison, finely acted by Mr. Lyn Harding, intent on foiling their game, strolls in with a terrific American accent and provides some comic relief; he is regarded with suspicion, bound and gagged, and left stunned while the others retire. Act III sees him recovering, and freeing himself by reaching ingeniously for a tool-bag and other necessities with the aid of tables and chairs placed within convenient distance. The Officer of the Prussian Guards (Mr. Gerald Lawrence) appears, having landed in a submarine; Howison, now free, lurks in a shadowy corner; the lady also comes; Max von Ardel hands her the scheme for an invasion of England—on conditions which may be imagined; at the right moment the gallant Captain leaps from his corner (von Ardel having been careful not to switch on *all* the lights), throttles and binds the villain, and walks off with him, after some by-play with a tin case supposed to con-

tain plans for the invasion *and* high explosives. In the last Act, at a reception in Hampstead where conspirators good and bad are to meet, at least half a dozen revolvers are drawn at one noisy interlude, and we hoped that everybody was going to shoot everybody else and so finish, after the familiar analogy of the Kilkenney cats. But the lady is merely chloroformed. Assisted by the repentant Mr. Schindler, she recovers, and confesses to the assembled members of the British Secret Intelligence Department that she shot her former lover in the wood where he had been deposited, bound and gagged—shot him "three times!" Her brother, a soldier (Mr. Hesketh Pearson) who has disowned her, forgives her at this cheering item of news; Colonel Wallingford (Mr. Dawson Millward) beams on her—he seems to have a great deal of responsibility with regard to the invasion for a colonel; Captain Howison says, "I love you"; the four spies are sent off with gentle hints from brandished revolvers; and all is well.

We may not have arranged this amazing conglomeration of events in precisely the correct order, but it gives an outline of the proceedings. To us, dazed and sorrowful, it seemed quite pathetic to see the talents of such artists as Mr. Millward, Mr. Owen Nares, Mr. Frederick Ross, Mr. Edmund Gwenn, Mr. Nigel Playfair, and others (Miss Stella Campbell, too, among the ladies) wasted on this "new drama," which might in fact be a parody of the most lurid piece to be found beyond the bridges. It had moments of amusement, for, as ever, those who interpret a play at this theatre must be the best and do their best; but, if it is necessary to be topical, Mr. C. B. Fernald, the author of the crude and valueless thing, has gone the wrong way to work. We look forward to the time when Sir George Alexander will once more charm us by his own acting in a piece which he feels worthy of his own art and that of the talented company he invariably secures.

W. L. R.

The City

THE news from the Russian frontier, the advance on the East front, and the declaration of war by Italy have induced a more hopeful feeling generally in City circles, though as an offset there is Mr. Lloyd George's retirement from the Treasury. Mr. McKenna from the financial point of view is an unknown quantity, and the great houses were very anxious that there should be continuity. On the Stock Exchange the business is small but the tone is fairly good, with a steady demand for recent issues of Colonial Scrip. Victorian, South African, Queensland and East Indian are all up, with stock reported scarce. Canadian Pacifics on better advices from New York are in some request, as are Argentines, both consequently being quoted higher. The South African market is firm, and the only real weakness noticeable is in German and Prussian stock. Oils are steady with small changes for and against holders; Rubbers are holding their own, and Tea shares, with certain exceptions like Assam, are better.

Rubber companies which have done better than or even as well as optimism anticipated in the last year or two are

rare. One of them is the Batavia Plantation Investments. The prospectus, in September, 1912, foreshadowed crops of 316,390 lbs. in 1914 from the estates, and the directors considered 15 per cent. dividend per annum could be maintained. With rubber slumping this was a courageous forecast, but it has been more than borne out. Dividends have been paid, free of income tax (£6,497 having been set aside to defray it), and it is now proposed, after payment of a final dividend of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (making 15 per cent. for the year), to carry forward £6,064, in place of £1,407 brought in. The profits earned in the year were £33,563 (an increase of £5,618), despite the extra allowance of over £900 for income tax. Reasonable capitalisation, economy of working and a richly productive soil account for this success.

The City Life Assurance Company is to be congratulated on the manner in which it has come out of the ordeal of last year. Its total income was £172,471. New policies numbering 31,054 were issued, assuring £583,999, representing an annual premium income of £25,370. In the ordinary branch 1,491 policies were issued assuring £178,748, at new annual premiums of £7,283. The premium income of the industrial branch was £30,586. The claims, including surrenders, which arose during the year in the various departments, amounted to £86,178, of which the life account ordinary accounted for £22,354, life account industrial for £10,680, bond investment account for £41,234, and the mortgage redemption account for £11,910. The dividend is at the rate of 3 per cent. on the Preferred shares, as before, the directors wisely keeping steadily in view the importance of building up reserves against contingencies.

CORRESPONDENCE

OUR LIMBLESS SAILORS AND SOLDIERS.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

Sir,—Having recently, through the courtesy of the Press, been able to make known the urgent need of Convalescent Hospitals for those who have lost their limbs in the war, we beg to inform your readers that Roehampton House (near London) has been acquired and will shortly be opened for this purpose, and that Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan has generously offered Dover House (almost adjoining) for the use of officers. These houses together are capable of accommodating about 300 cases.

Her Majesty Queen Mary has graciously consented to the hospitals being named "Queen Mary's Convalescent Auxiliary Hospitals," and has given a donation of £200.

Her Majesty Queen Alexandra has graciously extended her patronage to the scheme, and in sending a donation of £100 writes: "I am delighted to see you are taking up a subject which I have very much at heart—our disabled sailors and soldiers to be kept in chosen convalescent auxiliary hospitals until well enough to earn their own living—officers included."

The First Lord of the Admiralty and Field-Marshal the Secretary of State for War have signified their approval by becoming presidents.

The following committee has been formed: The Viscountess Falmouth; Mrs. Lewis Harcourt; Lady Lloyd; Lady Hamilton, Lady Henderson; Mrs. Gwynne Holford; the Duke of Portland, K.G.; the Rt. Hon. Lord St. Davids; Admiral Sir James Bruce, K.C.M.G.; Surgeon-General Sir Arthur Wm. May, D.G., C.B., R.N.; Major-General Sir Charles Crutchley, K.C.V.O.; Major-

General Sir Francis Lloyd, K.C.B.; Surgeon-General M. W. Russell, D.D.G., A.M.S.; Colonel J. Magill, C.B., representing the British Red Cross Society.

It is distressing to see the condition of these limbless men, many of them mere lads—with all their life before them—and with an outlook on their future more than sad. But hope and confidence return when they are assured that practical steps are being taken for their welfare.

At these convalescent hospitals our brave men will be cared for until they have recovered their strength and nerve; and, having learned to use their artificial limbs, they will again be capable of taking up employment in the form best suited to each individual. Working in conjunction with other Societies, every effort will be made to fit the men to earn their own living in the future.

To enable this urgent work to proceed without delay grants have been made by the National Relief Fund and the Red Cross Society. But we need a large sum in addition for the equipment, rent, and maintenance of the hospitals. It is for these gallant men—Sons of our Empire—that we earnestly appeal for funds to carry out the work efficiently. £50 will maintain for a year a bed to be named after the donor, and it is hoped that donations of this amount will be forthcoming from many quarters—including industrial firms—to secure the provision of county beds, beds for naval, military, and aircraft units, and also for men from our Overseas Dominions.

Communications and donations should be addressed to C. H. Kenderdine, Esq. (marked "Auxiliary Hospital"), at St. Stephen's House, Westminster, who will be pleased to answer all inquiries.

Yours obediently,

KATHLEEN FALMOUTH,

M. E. GWYNNE HOLFORD.

2, St. James's Square, S.W.

22, Wilton Street, S.W.

May 19, 1915.

BOOKS RECEIVED

MISCELLANEOUS.

Payment. By R. Allatini. (Andrew Melrose. 6s.)

Summer Friendships. By Dorothy Muir. Illustrated. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

Vainglory. By A. A. R. Firbank. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

In Gentlest Germany. By Hun Svedend (E. V. Lucas and George Morrow). (John Lane. 1s. net.)

The Magic of Experience. By H. S. Redgrove, B.Sc. (Dent. 2s. 6d. net.)

The World's Cotton Crops. By John A. Todd, B.L. (A. and C. Black. 10s. net.)

Labour Unrest. By G. E. Toogood. (A. Brown and Sons. 6d. net.)

WAR BOOKS.

Peace and War in Europe. By Gilbert Slater, M.A., D.Sc. (Constable and Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

Sixty American Opinions on the War. (T. Fisher Unwin. 1s. net.)

India and the War. With an Introduction by Lord Sydenham. Illustrated. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1s. net.)

FICTION.

"Fall In!" By J. P. Molyneux. (Hurst and Blackett. 6s.)

The Pagans. By Mrs. Hugh Fraser and Hugh Fraser. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)

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Asiatic Review; The Round Table.



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